

Leicester, Mass^{ts}. August 7. 1859.

Dear friend Webb;

Yrs. of 22^d July reached me 3 days since; it contained one for M. W. C. which I forthwith despatched to her. I had already purchased for you the photograph of Mr. Florey, and will as you request envelope it and have it in readiness for your son, whenever he may make his appearance. If you are able to give me a little fore-warning of his coming to Boston, I wish you would, for I would make my arrangements to meet him there; otherwise, the chances are several to one that he would come, and depart, without my seeing him, a thing which would grieve me very much. So if you can help me to a knowledge of his coming, I shall be glad. And if, as is hardly likely, you can communicate with him again before he comes to Boston, will you please impress it upon him, as an indispensable duty, that he is to see me, if I am in the flesh?

Your absent son - to mine, - the transition is quick & natural enough; - one traversing the immense Pacific, the other the Indian Ocean. You will rejoice with us, in the entirely pleasant & comforting tidings we have heard of Edward. We have had 2 letters, since his ship's arrival in Ceylon. When the last was closed the ship was on the immediate point of sailing for Sumatra, & he was going in her. He will probably proceed, by other conveyance, to Singapore, and may be Canton. He has been very well, & keeps his spirits well up, tho' he sometimes feels his loneliness rather painfully.

We have been going through some very disagreeable

Experiences with some of our antislavery agents. It has been growing for years - beginning with J. S. Foster's demand that we should take up, make up, and push his Disunion Voting Political Party - a most incongruous, self-contradictory, & absurd idea. Absolutely nobody (though rumor speaks of one concert somewhere in the State of New York, but his existence is mythical) espoused it, and of late it has slept. Not so some of the feelings which the discussion awakened. Foster & his wife have never been reconciled to their entire defeat on that matter; (-for, without really espousing the notion, or, I think, having any faith in it, herself, Mrs. F. has always had a very warm, & natural, sympathy in her husband's persevering labors to advance what he believed true) - and they have never felt fully cordial to the Exec. Comtee. It has been perfectly obvious to me that they were ready, on any pretty tolerable pretext, to take up an adverse position; and their influence drew along J. A. Howland, a townsman, (appointed an agent at Mrs. F.'s earnest solicitation, and by her influence,) a very upright & well-meaning man, but with very little education or culture, extremely narrow, often coarse in manner, & very prone to disputation. Latterly, Parker Pillsbury - one of the most morbidly sensitive persons I ever knew - has fancied himself ill-used, in some way or another. Any amount of attack from the foes of the cause, he can bear without flinching - in fact with a sort of pleasure, - but cannot brook a word of dissent, or opposition, from his associates. - But it is needless, and perhaps would be injurious, for me to go on with the details. For the difficulty, so far as P. P. is concerned, is, I trust, wholly over; and, as to the rest, we must await the developments which may be made. But, in brief, P. P.'s difficulties all were brought to a head by Miss

Martineau's Letter in the "Standard", advising him, & others, to leave the Society. Extraordinary advice indeed! and a pretty figure we should have made in calling any honest anti-slavery soul to quit our company. Between us, I think Mr. Chapman fully seconded Miss M.'s advice, and thought it spoken timely & well; but I believe not another person here thinks it other than most injudicious, inconsistent, & mischievous, - complicating all the previous difficulty. But I needn't go into this, for W. Phillips's letter, in the "Standard" of July 30., sets it all right - clear at least, - and has proved quite satisfactory to Pillsbury. For the rest of us, it is, in the main, where we have ever stood; to the extremists, on both sides, it is not satisfactory. Mrs. Chapman does not like it, tho' I could not seize the point of her objection to it; to the Fortens & Howland, on the other extreme, it is also unsatisfactory. The latter will make trouble, if they can; because they lack discretion, & breadth. - Mrs. C. will not, cannot, make trouble. She does lose the cause, far beyond any personal views of her own about it, she is discreet, and tho' she suffers, she will never wrangle - the very thing the Fortens & Howland will do, until the crack of doom. - I did not at all blame Pillsbury for feeling hurt about Miss Martineau's letter. I did blame him for saddling the responsibility of those letters on us, as he did, for a time, proposing a final separation from the Society, & uttering unheard-of extravagances & impossibilities. But W. Phillips's letter, his own reflection, & the advice and counsel of older & cooler heads, have brought him to a very different frame of mind. I had last Tuesday a very satisfactory interview with him. He cordially substitutes Phillips's language for his own; - he does not insist, (as heretofore he has,) on

calling Dr. Cheever, & other working antislavery men,
"enemies" of the cause, - its worst enemies, - but that
they are, on acct. of their present ecclesiastical position, obstacles
to its progress. To me there is a very sensible and
very marked difference in the meaning of these words, as
his pet resolutions would have had little opposition in New York
had they been so phrased. But "obstacles" means, as he
told me, all he wished to convey by "enemies." - Garrison
is not prepared to call any working antislavery men so
much as obstacles in the cause's way. He sees clearly, &
protests openly, against whatever is compromising in the
position, but denies that they can be, morally or
philosophically, accounted "obstacles", while vigorously at
work for the overthrow of Slavery. - But, I think they
be, & must be, so accounted - i.e. as obstacles to the growth
of the cause, while they are urging it on a defective and an
insufficient basis, relying not upon the force of Truth, but
concocting sectarian and sectional schemes, and especially as
they are misrepresenting and slandering the true, the
uncompromising & impartial Antislavery movement, as even
Dr. Cheever does, at times. This shall not make me blind
to his virtues & services to the Cause, nor slow to acknowledge
them. Our Cause can well afford to be generous; it
pre-eminently bound to be just, to all men. I hope P.P. will
be more just, in future. Honest, fearless, & faithful, I know
he is, & will be. He goes to Ohio, in a few weeks, ~~not~~
~~as~~ not nominally as our agent, but really in the fullest
sympathy, and sustained by his old friends. - I have
heard of a letter he had had from you, which afflicted him
but have not seen it, nor heard any particulars. - I have
need say, this letter of mine is a private one, - quite free to
Mr. Webb, of course. So it would be to E. Wigham, or M. Estlin, but I

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